

March 11, 2019

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Patrick A. Duhaney, City Manager

Subject: **Columbia Parkway Update**

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with an update on the recent landslides along Columbia Parkway and the plan to address this issue.

Current Situation

Columbia Parkway has experienced significant landslide activity in the past several weeks, with the most recent one occurring yesterday. While the overall condition of the uphill retaining walls along the parkway is good, the slopes above the walls continue to slough off and spill debris over the walls due to decay and deterioration that has occurred over the years.

These landslides pose a safety risk to users of the parkway. In addition to requiring several extended road closures, which pose inconveniences to the public, these landslides require the Administration to divert already limited City resources toward time consuming and costly emergency cleanup efforts. This includes having to temporarily reassign staff from various City departments to assist with road closure and cleanup duties, meaning they are pulled from other maintenance assignments such as pothole repair. One recent landslide in late February caused a mid-slope crib retaining wall failure that necessitated an emergency repair contract at a cost of approximately \$1 million, which Council approved funding for last week.

Long-Term Solution

This landslide activity is not new, and in fact has been an ongoing maintenance concern, as well as a potential hazard to the public, for many decades. Recently, however, there are concerns that the landslide activity has increased in frequency and requires quick action to address the underlying issues. The Administration is working with the Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) on a comprehensive report that will outline preliminary engineering approaches and cost estimates for the development of a permanent solution for providing more stability to the slopes and more certainty and safety for Columbia Parkway users. While the evaluation process is ongoing, the initial intent is to construct a new retaining system to supplement the existing retaining walls along the parkway. The report will outline the specifics in greater detail.

The rough construction cost for a permanent solution from the Bains Street exit to Torrence Parkway is estimated at \$10 million. The Administration is currently reviewing possible funding options.

This report is expected to be issued at the end of the month. A draft funding ordinance for Council's review and consideration will be presented at that time as well.

The constant closing of the Parkway is incredibly inconvenient to the thousands of commuters who rely on it every day; however, closing it is necessary to allow City workers to address the public safety risks posed by the landslides. Please know the Administration is working as quickly as possible to find an engineering solution and the necessary funding required to start the work as soon possible.